



Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

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Tuesday, 16 January 2001, 10 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Jayakumar	(Singapore)
<i>Members:</i>	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Sergeev
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries

Letter dated 8 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2001/21).

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing members

The President: At the outset of this meeting, I should like to extend best wishes for the year 2001 to all Members of the United Nations. I should also like to express the Council's deep gratitude to the outgoing members of the Council for their important contributions to its work. The representatives of Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia and the Netherlands, all in an excellent manner, contributed their talents to the business of the Council during their term of membership.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries

Letter dated 8 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2001/21)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Egypt, Fiji, India, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden and Zambia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Listre (Argentina), Mr. Stuart (Australia), Mr. Sotirov (Bulgaria), Mr. Heinbecker (Canada), Mr. Bebars (Egypt), Mr. Naidu (Fiji), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Akasaka (Japan), Mr. Al-Hussein (Jordan), Mr. Abdul Khalid (Malaysia), Mr. Sharma (Nepal), Mr. Hughes (New Zealand), Mr. Apata (Nigeria), Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan), Mr. Stańczyk (Poland), Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea),

Mr. Ducaru (Romania), Mr. Ka (Senegal), Ms. Ndhlovu (South Africa), Mr. Schori (Sweden) and Mr. Musamchime (Zambia) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the letter dated 8 January 2001 from Singapore, document S/2001/21.

I am pleased to welcome participants to this open debate on the subject "Strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries" (TCCs). Before I throw the floor open, permit me to make a few introductory comments.

This topic is timely. We are witnessing another significant upsurge in peacekeeping operations. The success of peacekeeping operations depends on a healthy triangular relationship between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the TCCs. Recent events have shown that all is not well in this triangle. The weakest of these links are those with the TCCs. One key goal of this debate must be to lead to a healthy triangle with respect to all three links.

However, we must remind ourselves that this is not a new problem. After the disasters in Somalia and Bosnia, the Council did some soul-searching and produced two documents, S/PRST/1994/62 and S/PRST/1996/13. Unfortunately, despite these lessons learned, we have witnessed similar problems in Sierra Leone recently. Clearly, we need to find out what went wrong and how it can be set right. The report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, or the Brahimi report, has already activated some action on the part of the Security Council and the Secretariat to strengthen consultations with the TCCs. However, more can and needs to be done. We have to go beyond closer consultations to strengthening cooperation between these three partners of peacekeeping.

That said, we do not expect to arrive at all of the answers today. Rather, we hope that today's discussions will be a useful start on the road towards resolving the problems related to this important issue. The Singapore delegation has circulated background papers, which can be found in document S/2001/21. This document

provides some background and also raises some questions that could be addressed. With the aim of stimulating good discussion, let me briefly mention some of the questions that we might wish to address in today's open debate.

First, what are the key problems in the relations between the TCCs and the Council and the Secretariat? Has the practice of meetings with the TCCs prior to the adoption of Council resolutions helped? How can we further improve the content and form of private meetings with TCCs to make them more interactive and productive?

Secondly, apart from meetings with TCCs, what other mechanisms and channels can be used to strengthen the link between the Security Council and TCCs in peacekeeping? Does the current corporate culture encourage sufficient interaction with TCCs?

Thirdly, how can the three crucial partners — the Security Council, the Secretariat and the TCCs — cooperate better to address the peacekeeping problems of this age: commitment gaps in the contribution of troops to all United Nations peacekeeping operations, the failures and shortcomings of United Nations peacekeeping operations and the problems concerning the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers?

To ensure that the concerns of troop-contributing countries are fully addressed in this debate, the Council has agreed that we will begin this morning's deliberations by first listening to the TCCs, after the Deputy Secretary-General, Louise Fréchette, has spoken. The entire morning session has been set aside for the TCCs to present their views. Subsequently, at 3 p.m. sharp, when we reconvene, the members of the Security Council will share their views. We hope that they will also respond to some of the concerns and suggestions stated by the TCCs. Following them, we will hear the comments of those TCCs that were not able to speak in the morning session.

Finally, we do not at this stage have any preconceived notions of the outcome of this open debate. We invite the delegations to present their views and ideas and to share their experiences. It is hoped that as a result of this exercise, some concrete recommendations will emerge which can be followed up on. The goal must be to enhance the relationship between the TCCs, the Security Council and the Secretariat, and bring about a new spirit of cooperation

among the three partners. If these recommendations are accepted, we could then consider whether the Council should formulate a resolution or presidential statement to adopt them.

I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General.

The Deputy Secretary-General: Before I begin my address I would like to inform all present that we are trying to lower the temperature in this house. I think it is going to make our meetings much less pleasant if we do not manage to solve that problem. So we are working on it.

We meet today to address an issue of central importance to our efforts to reform and revitalize United Nations peacekeeping for a new era. This meeting reflects a recognition that without strong, close, and constructive cooperation among the Security Council, the Secretariat and the countries which supply the troops for our missions, we cannot expect to find success in this vital endeavour.

Over the past year the international community has shown renewed political will to act to prevent conflict through the instrument of peacekeeping. At the same time, our operations are being asked to discharge increasingly complex tasks, often in hostile environments. In this context, it is more important than ever that there be the closest possible cooperation among the key elements in the peacekeeping machinery.

In the General Assembly, in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and in the Security Council, the international community has repeatedly acknowledged the importance of a vibrant and vigorous partnership, grounded in an ongoing dialogue. Most recently, the need for partnership and close communication was stressed in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. I hope that today's discussion can help us to identify ways to pursue this goal.

Much of the focus of today's discussion concerns the framework for consultation between the Security Council and troop-contributors. We all stand to gain from a clear understanding between those who prepare the mandates and those who execute them. Troop-contributors need to know clearly what Security Council members envision, and the Security Council members need to understand what troop-contributors

are prepared to do. While the process of consultation may be time-consuming and complex, it pays invaluable dividends — not only for the troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and the Council, but also for those vulnerable populations we are seeking to help.

A central aspect of this effort is to improve cooperation between TCCs, the Security Council and the Secretariat. This will help us address such problems as commitment gaps in the contributions of troops; failures or shortcomings in the operations; and problems concerning safety and security, as you, Mr. President, have mentioned. We in the Secretariat are committed to providing accurate and timely information to political decision-makers in the Security Council, proposing options for action, and assessing accurately the risks and costs of each of these options. At the same time, we must provide troop contributors with the information they need to decide whether they wish to participate in a particular operation, including the requirements and risks that are involved. With both groups of interlocutors, our contacts allow us to listen to and take account of their concerns, expectations and insights.

In this context, the Secretariat attaches the highest importance to providing frequent and comprehensive briefings to Member States. We hold consultations with Member States during the formulation and revision of concepts of operations and at times of crisis. With the recent increase in resources, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will be able to make its senior staff available — including its military and civilian police experts — to provide even more frequent briefings. We look forward to exploring with Member States how these sessions can be improved so as to respond to their requirements as fully as possible.

In addition to its regular meetings with groups of troop contributors, the Secretariat stands ready to meet with the representatives of individual Member States at any time, upon request, to discuss any concerns relating to the field. Furthermore, the Secretariat has not hesitated to introduce innovations where this would be useful; one example was the meeting the Secretariat convened in August 2000 with chiefs of defence staff of those countries contributing to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

In addition to the imperative to improve consultations, the Panel on Peace Operations contains a number of practical recommendations that can help improve our cooperation with troop contributors. For example, the establishment of a stand-by list of military and civilian police specialists would accelerate the recruitment of mission staff, which could then help make use of the expertise of troop contributors early in the planning phase.

Strengthened stand-by arrangements could lead to further opportunities for training of all potential peacekeepers, resulting in turn in a more coherent and consistent approach. It could also allow many administrative issues to be resolved in advance, such as negotiations related to contingent-owned equipment. This would reduce the risk of misunderstandings, delays and frictions.

The strength and promise of peacekeeping lies in its collaborative nature. By consulting closely, by coordinating our responses and our actions and establishing a relationship of trust and confidence, we can fully exploit the potential of peacekeeping.

We welcome today's debate, which we hope will lay the groundwork for still-closer ties among the Security Council, troop contributors and the Secretariat.

The President: I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her statement.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan): I will speak on behalf of Ambassador Shamshad Ahmad, who had to leave for Pakistan on official business. He would have wanted to make these remarks himself, in view of his deep involvement with issues related to peacekeeping, and in particular the topic before the Council today.

We would like to begin by felicitating the delegations of Singapore, Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius and Norway on their non-permanent membership of the Security Council from 1 January this year. We are confident of the important contribution that they, as elected members, will make to the work of the Council. I would also like to express our deep appreciation to the outgoing non-permanent members of the Security Council — Argentina, Canada, Malaysia, Namibia and

the Netherlands — for the exemplary manner in which they discharged their responsibilities.

Mr. President, as you mentioned in your introductory statement, today's discussion is most timely. We can only agree with you that the success of peacekeeping operations depends on a healthy triangular relationship between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries (TCCs).

The strengthening of cooperation with TCCs is a topic which is fundamental to the goal of making United Nations peacekeeping more efficient and effective. Regular, meaningful and effective cooperation between TCCs, the Security Council and the Secretariat on all operational matters is an essential element of United Nations peacekeeping operations. We believe that, had this issue been addressed in the early 1990s, many of the setbacks suffered by United Nations peacekeeping operations could have been avoided. Had a proper mechanism for consulting TCCs been in place, some of the problems in Somalia could have been easily avoided. Had past consultations been more meaningful and effective, the tragedy in Srebrenica might never have happened.

The Security Council has been aware of this problem for quite some time and has made several attempts to deal with it. The Council established the process of TCC meetings, the guidelines for which were laid down in its two presidential statements — also referred to in your introductory statement, Mr. President — PRST/1994/62 and PRST/1996/13. These guidelines contained elements that could have helped in making the three-way dialogue more meaningful and effective. However, more often than not these guidelines have remained largely ignored. As a result, TCC meetings have become little more than ritualistic briefings by the Secretariat. These meetings are convened more out of form than out of purpose.

The Brahimi Panel report has correctly highlighted the need to strengthen and institutionalize the Council's cooperation and coordination with TCCs. In response to the recommendations of the Brahimi Panel report, the Council took a step in the right direction when it agreed in its resolution 1327 (2000) to strengthen the existing system of consultations through the holding of private meetings with TCCs in the presence of Secretariat representatives. While this resolution does hold the promise of a more formalized

process of consultations, there are a number of aspects that still need discussion to make the consultation mechanism more effective and useful.

We believe the best way of achieving this is through the establishment of ad hoc subsidiary organs of the Council, as provided by Article 29 of the Charter. These subsidiary organs would be mission-specific and based around a "core group" of troop-contributing countries for each peacekeeping operation. The Secretary-General would identify the core group of TCCs for each peacekeeping operation, which would become operational at the conceptional phase of each operation.

Consultations with the core group should begin well in advance of the establishment of the operation and be factored into the drawing up of new mandates. This engagement should continue on a regular basis through the implementation phase. In particular, such consultations should be held when the Council is considering a change in the mandate of an operation, including the use of force, or renewal or completion of a mandate, or when there is a rapid deterioration of the situation on the ground, which threatens the safety and security of peacekeepers.

In putting forward this idea, my delegation would like to emphasize that our proposal is not aimed at supplanting the Charter role of the Security Council. The object of the proposal is merely to facilitate unity of purpose between the Security Council, the TCCs and the Secretariat on any given operation. The aim of such an exercise would be to help ensure that the mandates eventually decided upon are precise, credible and achievable, with clearly defined political objectives. The phenomenon of incremental reinterpretations of mandates and of "mission creep" needs to be avoided at all costs.

The Secretariat must also work closely with TCCs. It is our experience that too often the Secretariat does not speak with one voice. TCCs often end up getting mixed signals and mixed directions from the Secretariat simply because of communication and coordination problems within its various components. We hope that the new leadership of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will look into this matter seriously and give it high priority in the upcoming comprehensive review of the Department.

The Secretariat must provide TCCs and Council members background and briefing materials, as well as

the agenda, well in advance of meetings, unlike the present practice. Similarly, the date and venue should be, as far as circumstances allow, announced in the *Journal* of the United Nations several days before the event.

The quality of consultations would depend on the quality and the accuracy of information and assessments that are provided by the Secretariat. As past experience has shown, there can be neither efficient planning nor clear and credible mandates if these are inefficient or partial assessments. Sierra Leone is a case in point. Both the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have crucial responsibilities to bear in this regard.

It is said that hindsight is 20/20. If there is one lesson that we have learned from the tragedies of recent ill-fated peacekeeping operations, it is that there must be more coordination within the United Nations system in carrying out such operations. Therefore, the strengthening of cooperation and coordination between the three pillars of United Nations peacekeeping — the Security Council, the TCCs and the United Nations Secretariat — cannot be emphasized enough.

In conclusion, I would like to say that we are particularly pleased to note that today's deliberations of the Council, under Singapore's presidency, allow non-members of the Council to express their views prior to Council members, breaking from past practice. As a result, we hope that opinions presented by non-members today will not only be heard, but also be taken into consideration by the Council during its future deliberations on an issue of such great importance to the whole membership.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Jordan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Hussein (Jordan): I would first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and all the new members of the Security Council on the assumption of your duties. We are, of course, grateful to you, Mr. President, and to the members for the gracious gesture of allowing non-members to take the floor first on this subject, and my delegation thanks you warmly for it. I would also like to offer our appreciation to Ambassador Lavrov for the dedicated manner in which he handled the Council's affairs during the month of December.

I anticipate that a number of delegations will, during the course of the day, have us believe that the thematic debate is largely redundant, in view of the comprehensive discussions that flowed from the development of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone mandate in September 2000 and the issuance of the Brahimi Panel report. It will probably be said that we have spoken enough; what remains now is for us to implement Security Council resolution 1327 (2000) and General Assembly resolution 55/135.

My delegation would agree absolutely on the need for the speedy implementation of the two resolutions. However, we would also join you, Mr. President, in seeing a need to review the topic again, and we intend, with your kind permission, to make one observation and to follow it up with a proposal.

For lack of time, we will also restrict our comments to the relationship between the Council and the troop contributors, not because we deem the Secretariat's role here as unimportant — far from it — but because we believe that before we can formulate procedural mechanisms, we must first build some trust and understanding between the Member States of this Organization.

When we speak of strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries (TCCs), we assume that two distinct communities exist: the Council and the contributors; or, put another way, we suppose that members of the Council are themselves not the contributors of troops. Obviously, this is not the case when peacekeeping, whether conducted by the United Nations or any other organization, is viewed in general terms or when participation in it is examined through a long historical lens. It is well appreciated that almost all Council members have, at one stage or another, contributed very significantly to United Nations, as well as to other, peacekeeping operations on the ground.

When this assumption of there being two communities does have resonance, and it resonates strongly, is when specific United Nations peacekeeping operations mounted today are recognized as being exceptionally dangerous; that is, when the risk of death and injury to United Nations peacekeepers is higher than is normally the case. In almost all of these cases it is also now widely accepted that United Nations battalions, and not monitors or specialists alone, should

be part of the mission's operational tapestry if the United Nations is to accord some sense of security and stability to the country or region under consideration.

If United Nations peacekeeping is examined today in broad statistical terms, we see the following. By the end of the year 2000, and specifically in November 2000, out of 189 Members of the United Nations, less than half — 88 to be exact — were contributors, including 14 members of the Security Council. Twenty-seven countries were contributors of formed units, including nine members of the Security Council, and by formed units I mean anything from platoon up; and out of 189 Member States, 22 supplied the United Nations with battalions, but only two of them were Council members.

So our discussion today, focusing as it does on the relationship between the Council and troop contributors, makes sense only in the context of dangerous operations, requiring in most instances the injection of United Nations battalions to provide a more secure environment. Now, of course, we recognize that some members of the Council have never shirked the responsibility of sending their battalions into harm's way in the service of the United Nations. Nevertheless, the distribution of the risk burden is still very uneven. With a small number of Member States outside the Council shouldering the lion's share of risk, one cannot but feel there is something desperately wrong and immoral about all of this.

Over the last decade, Jordan has consistently been one of the largest contributors to United Nations peacekeeping, having dispatched fully equipped battalions that are self-sustaining to some of the most dangerous and unforgiving areas of conflict, and we have suffered our fair share of casualties; and yet we are one of the smaller and poorer countries in the world, still owed millions of United States dollars by the United Nations for both current operations and operations that have long ceased to exist.

My delegation does not intend to elicit any sympathy or be boastful about this. It would be improper for me to do so given the enormous sacrifices made by other Member States speaking here today. But while we are prepared to serve with others, anywhere and everywhere, we are not prepared to be the servants of others, obeying blindly, unquestioning.

The preferred solution to the problem before us is not one of strengthening cooperation between the Council and the troop contributors in a manner that only reinforces the status quo — that is, the existence of two communities — but, as Bangladesh has argued recently, of assuring ourselves that a respectable number of those serving on the Council themselves become troop contributors when the Council mandates the more dangerous United Nations-run peacekeeping operations. It almost goes without saying that the price of privilege — the privilege of serving on the Council, the privilege of acting on behalf of the rest of us non-members in matters relating to international peace and security — should include the sharing of risk in the field.

We therefore appeal most respectfully to the members of the Security Council that, when considering a difficult mandate for prospective United Nations peacekeepers, they lead us by example, and be first in line to offer troops. With that, you can be assured, Mr. President, a great many of us will be sure to follow. Not only would our Secretary-General then surmount his current problem of finding the required number of peacekeepers for the more dangerous missions, but the neat and clear-cut distinction between Council and troop contributors would happily fade into irrelevance.

Until we reach this preferred situation, my delegation will continue to be realistic, though. We will continue to defend strongly the position long held by the Non-Aligned Movement on the need for more effective, institutional consultations between the Security Council and the TCCs. In this regard, we believe the responsibility for the creation of a more meaningful partnership lies principally with whomsoever holds the presidency of the Council and rests on the execution of sheer common sense.

Ultimately, we consider the forging of such a relationship important only insofar as it is a temporary measure until we reach a point when, one day, many more of us will be willing to share the risks of deploying United Nations troops into an uncertain environment.

We propose that, in one year's time, the then President of the Council consider the possibility of holding of a second open meeting on this subject, to gauge how successful we have been in fulfilment of these aims.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sharma (India): Mr. President, it is a great pleasure to see you presiding in the very first month of Singapore's current tenure on the Security Council. This is truly a remarkable inauguration of Singapore's service on the Council. Your wisdom in identifying the topic of strengthening co-operation with troop-contributing countries (TCCs) has also come not a day too soon, as troop contributors have been assisting the Council in this key activity of the United Nations for over half a century. We have the hope that this excellent initiative of Singapore in holding an open debate will be the harbinger of a new culture of mutually constructive association and interaction between troop contributors and the Council, which has been prominent by its absence. We commend you for identifying this pivotal theme, centrally related to the Council's work, on which a debate could have been held much earlier, in preference to some others we have seen here.

In its last presidential statement on enhancing consultations with TCCs, in March 1996, the Council agreed to keep this issue under review and stood ready to consider further measures and new mechanisms to further enhance the arrangements in the light of experience. It has taken another major crisis in peacekeeping and a panel of external experts to remind the Council that all was not well with existing arrangements, even though this is a subject on which we have spoken repeatedly for the past few years in relevant bodies such as the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Fourth Committee and the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform.

The issue of meaningful consultations between troop contributors and the Council is not a question to be determined by preserving status or privilege, but by necessity. Troop-contributing countries put at risk the lives of their soldiers in the service of the United Nations, in upholding and preserving the cherished ideals of the Charter, strikingly more than do many members of the Council who hold primary responsibility in this regard. These members should at least take the lead in ensuring that troop contributors have an effective say in the conduct of peacekeeping operations.

The Brahimi Panel had made a specific proposal on strengthening consultations with TCCs in paragraph 61 of its report. Unfortunately, perhaps due to oversight, this recommendation did not find its way into the summary of recommendations of the report. The Council, which otherwise rushed to embrace the Panel's recommendations, found it expedient to ignore this recommendation in its resolution 1327 (2000) of 13 November 2000. Instead, it came up with an ingenious formula of an improved system of consultations with the TCCs by "significantly" strengthening the existing system of consultations by agreeing to the holding of private meetings.

Why should the laudable attempt to arrive at an appropriate mechanism of mutually advantageous communication between the troop contributors and the Council, of which the larger United Nations membership is entirely supportive, apparently be seen as root canal work by the Council, particularly when this is an obligation on the Council and not an indulgence by it?

The Council held its first such private meeting with the TCCs on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in early October last year, when faced with a crisis on the withdrawal of India and Jordan, the two leading contributors to UNAMSIL. This was a case of too little, too late. If experience is any guide, results in future with such an approach will be no better. We need to learn from experience so that errors of the past are not repeated and the lessons learned are given practical expression.

To illustrate the gulf between precept and practice, let us recall that on 7 September 2000 the Council, meeting at the level of heads of State and Government, solemnly declared in its resolution 1318 (2000) its determination to strengthen consultations with TCCs, and yet four days later it put out a draft resolution on UNAMSIL in blue, ambitiously expanding its tasks, impervious to the serious reservations expressed by two of the largest troop contributors to that mission, precipitating their withdrawal.

Indeed, even earlier in the spring, when these troop-contributing countries formally sought to participate in a meeting of the Council on UNAMSIL, they were denied the opportunity and not even shown the courtesy of being sent a written response. Those who actually contribute to the maintenance of

international peace and security through their participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, as against those who are primarily responsible under the Charter to do so, should not be kept at arm's length, when they are the arm of the Council.

Let us for a moment consider what has transpired since the adoption of resolution 1327 (2000) on 13 November 2000. Last month, a meeting was called of the TCCs on UNAMSIL, just a day after the eighth report of the Secretary-General on the mission was issued. It was not surprising that, in spite of the briefing from the Secretariat, troop contributors were not in a position to contribute meaningfully to the discussions. Notwithstanding the presidential statements of 1994 and 1996, such meetings have indeed become pro forma and ritualistic and not an occasion for fruitful deliberations and enabling forming of shared perspectives, as they should be.

It is instructive to read the records of the Council's meetings in the early 1960s, when the first operation in the Congo was set up. That was a conflict within a State, with the regional Powers involved, mercenaries deployed, the United Nations invited in and then spurned by some of the parties to the conflict, a massive humanitarian and refugee crisis, a collapse of administration which the United Nations had to replace, a Security Council agonizing over whether it should mandate a Chapter VII operation, a Secretary-General and a mission blamed for not doing enough and the Secretary-General responding that the Council had not given him either the mandate or the means to do more — in other words, all the hallmarks of what is believed to be the new peacekeeping.

The significant difference was that all this was played out in open meetings of the Council, at which all countries with an interest, including the troop contributors, participated whenever they felt it was needed. At one stage, India had 6,000 of the 16,000 troops deployed and the Indian Defence Minister spoke more than once to the Council. Permanent Representative C.S. Jha spelt out, in words just as relevant today, why India wanted to be not only heard by the Council, but to have an influence on its decisions:

"We cannot forget, nor should the Council forget, that at very great sacrifice we have involved ourselves in the Congo, and that

involvement does not mean merely the discomfort, the inconveniences and sometimes the loss of life to our young men serving in the Congo. It has a deep connexion with the whole state of public opinion in our country and, ourselves being a democratic country, this naturally has a great influence on our Parliament and on our Government." (S/PV.982, p. 7)

Unfortunately, though the TCCs could speak far more often than they can now, their views on what needed to be done were ignored, with the same consequences then as now. As things started to go sour, more than half a dozen of the troop contributors withdrew from the Congo operation because they did not agree with the way it was being run by the Council and by the Secretariat. Nothing really has changed. The Council has to be aware at all times that it is acting on behalf of the membership and not to safeguard its own preferences.

The General Assembly and the Secretary-General used modalities in the Congo that might usefully be revived where needed. The Assembly set up a Conciliation Commission, to which it appointed mostly representatives from the TCCs, who were the only ones in close touch with ground realities and with all the parties to the conflict. The Secretary-General set up an Advisory Committee comprising TCCs to help him tackle the crisis. Groups of friends of the Secretary-General have sometimes been set up for later crises and have played a useful role. These are modalities worth considering by the General Assembly, which, under Article 11 of the Charter, retains a responsibility on these issues if the Council and the Secretariat do not take them up.

Drawing on our experience in peacekeeping from the Congo to Sierra Leone, I will make some recommendations on when and how there should be closer consultations between the Council, troop contributors and the Secretariat.

These consultations should start when the Council mandates an operation. By then, the Secretariat has decided which countries should be TCCs and it has a concept of operations. At that stage, there should be a meeting or meetings of the Council, the Secretariat and the potential troop contributors to explain in some detail what the scope of the tasks is, what the likely problems are, what the TCCs will be expected to provide and what to do. TCCs must commit themselves

to an agreed set of tasks with resources and problems identified, and establish that they have the means to discharge their obligations. This is the stage at which those who are considering participation can assess their readiness in terms of the challenge of the task.

Participants in these meetings should share operational information which some permanent members have and do provide on an ad hoc basis to some TCCs. This information is often invaluable in helping prepare for a difficult mission in unfamiliar terrain.

The meetings should introduce TCCs to Secretariat bodies that they do not interact with, but which are often prime movers in some operations. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs comes to mind, but there are others. The TCCs need to know what these bodies and agencies are doing in the mission area and what sort of support they expect from the military, and do their own assessment of whether this can be offered and at what cost, because quite often there is a tension involved between different areas of a peacekeeping operations work.

These meetings must in particular consider the concepts of operation, which may bear the stamp of concepts developed by military alliances proposing deployments and tasks that can be carried out by relatively small numbers of troops only if, as their national or alliance strategic doctrines also require, they have limitless mobility, seamless cooperation between units, interoperability of the most modern equipment and a range of force multipliers in close support. What the United Nations gets is the same plan, but only the small numbers. Staff officers from the developing countries that have to execute these plans in a peacekeeping operation can explain why they will not work, as they so often do not in practice.

There must be close consultations in the preparations for deployment. All responsible TCCs send a reconnaissance mission out to the area of operations before deploying their troops. This is a basic professional requirement, which any army foregoes at its peril. Amazingly, the United Nations refuses to fund these visits, though the benefits come to the operation. We recommend that, as a standard policy, the United Nations require all TCCs to mount these missions, which the Organization should pay for. On its return from the reconnaissance, the TCC team should come to New York to share its findings with the Department of

Peacekeeping Operations and, if necessary, with the Security Council. Quite often, until a TCC with a professional army has sent out its team, no multidisciplinary military team will have gone over the ground to try to match a Council mandate with local realities. A professional reconnaissance team can give early warning of dangers and problems that might arise.

If a tripartite meeting between the Council, the Secretariat and other TCCs cannot be arranged, at the very least the Secretariat should record faithfully and circulate to all concerned what a reconnaissance team has returned with. Even if mandates are not changed, which would mean the Council's having to adopt a resolution, a faulty concept of operation or pattern of deployment must then be corrected. In Sierra Leone, for instance, a battalion was being split between two contiguous towns. This seemed logical, except that the plan had forgotten that there was a rather large river dividing them, without a bridge on it. These errors can be corrected early and quickly through professional reconnaissance and proper consultations.

Consultations must be immediate whenever there is a change of situation on the ground. TCCs are not only the first to know that things are going wrong; they also have the keenest interest in being told what the Council and the Secretariat have in mind, because it is their troops who will get the blame for failure or take the casualties. The Secretariat and the Council, as required, cannot evade the hard decisions needed. For instance, when a party to an agreement tests out the peacekeepers, when do they use force, and how much? It is known that *provocateurs* want to prove that the United Nations is taking sides and that the use of force by the United Nations might be taken as an excuse to resile from the agreement it is there to monitor. Throughout the crisis in Sierra Leone, TCCs were bedevilled with this problem. The Secretariat refused to take a decision, leaving it to the Mission leadership to exercise local judgement. This was foolish, since the consequences for failure were shared, reflecting at least as badly on the Council and the Secretariat and tarnishing the image of the United Nations as a whole. Collective decisions, not just consultations, are essential.

Consultations must be held with TCCs before the Council changes a mandate, which it is often tempted to do when things go wrong. TCCs are often the only ones that can properly advise if a change is needed, if

what the Council has in mind will make matters worse or better, if it can be done militarily with the resources available and, if it can, what the outcome is likely to be. The Secretariat may have this information too, relayed from the field, but be diffident about opposing powerful voices in the Council. On other occasions, when its own predilections may be shared by these members, the advice from the field is suppressed. It is the Council that must make the decisions, but its members would agree that they can only make informed decisions if they are given the information they need. As we discovered in Sierra Leone, most members of the Council were as clueless about what was going on there as any non-member; they were being persuaded to take decisions, which were faulty, essentially on trust. The TCCs could have told them, but the TCCs were kept away from them.

TCCs must know about, and accept in advance, material changes to the terms and conditions under which they committed their troops. This is obviously essential when there is a formal change from a Chapter VI to a Chapter VII mandate, but the Council tends to finesse this by laying down Chapter VII tasks under Chapter VI mandates. This collective agreement is essential for the United Nations because it must satisfy itself that troops trained and equipped to carry out a set of agreed tasks can in fact take on, and do well, a set of radically altered tasks. For the TCCs it is just as important, because their Governments and Parliaments want to know why their soldiers have been sent into situations not anticipated when the United Nations request for forces was accepted.

When force is authorized — and when things go wrong, this is the first instinct — the Council must implement Articles 43 and 44 of the Charter. As we have repeatedly pointed out, Article 44 stipulates that TCCs must participate in the Council's decisions, not just be consulted on them.

Consultations must be held before the Council changes the legal framework within which peacekeepers operate. In Sierra Leone a special court was set up, with an impact on the operation and dangerous new tasks on which TCCs were not consulted. Those consultations should be mandatory under the procedure I have spelled out. But as TCCs will now see, the Council is proposing that the statute of the Special Court should give it residual powers to try peacekeepers, although under the status-of-forces agreements under which TCCs send their troops abroad

they enjoy complete immunity. The Council cannot bind them through decisions to which they are not a party, and which conflict with and undermine their agreements with the United Nations; if it does, traditional TCCs will find it difficult to continue to support the United Nations.

How are those consultations at various stages to be held? The Council is the master of its own procedures, but there are several possibilities, some of which are listed in the President's paper. Private meetings are welcome as an interim measure, but they cannot be a solution. Resolution 1327 (2000) seeks to formalize that practice, but we need to go beyond this. In particular, instead of resorting to ad hoc measures, a regular body should be created that comprises members of the Council and contributors of formed units to a particular mission, to interact on various aspects of the conduct of that particular operation.

In addition, I want to remind the Council that Article 47, paragraph 2, of the Charter, which set up the Military Staff Committee, stipulated that the Committee could include officers from any Member States

“when the efficient discharge of the Committee's responsibilities requires the participation of that Member in its work.”

Why not revive that Committee, which is moribund, give it the mandate to follow peacekeeping operations, and use it as the forum for consultations with TCCs on purely military aspects?

There are some other ways in which these consultations and the performance of peacekeeping operations can be improved. I will list three. It might be useful if Council missions to a peacekeeping operation, which are now quite common, took with them representatives of TCCs. Apart from boosting morale among the troops, it would ensure that, on return, there was a common understanding among both Council members and TCCs about what was conveyed to the mission by the troops on the ground. The practice, started in Sierra Leone, of meeting with TCCs before and after a Council mission should continue, though these meetings would now be much more in the way of joint preparations to consider the way forward.

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) also undertakes its own field trips, sometimes to the site of peacekeeping

operations. It, too, should be encouraged to meet with TCCs before its trip, and brief them on return. The ACABQ looks at the seamy side of the United Nations life, and what it turns up is useful for all of us to know. Its published reports must necessarily be sanitized. An informal discussion with Council members and TCCs might be much more productive.

The Secretariat briefs donors on activities executed through trust funds in peacekeeping operations. Often, this is the most sensitive part of a peacekeeping mission, where conflicts of interest are the sharpest and where the most onerous duties are placed upon troops. Quite often, TCCs are not even aware that these are tasks that they have to do until their troops arrive in theatre. TCCs must be associated with these briefings to donors. As the Secretariat explains what has or can be done, TCCs can explain the operational, and sometimes the political, costs of what the donors propose.

Publicity is an area where most TCCs believe the Secretariat lets them down shamefully, and where much closer consultations are essential. The Secretariat believes that the United Nations needs to promote itself in the developed world, where the criticism comes from. The Secretariat has an obligation to do justice to the performance and accomplishments of TCCs where merited, if necessary through special media briefings. The media in developed countries are independently fed the spin desired by the interests of developed countries. The Council very rarely, except through the odd presidential statement to the press, refutes the often false criticism that operations endure. In a crisis there must be a way for the Council, the Secretariat and TCCs — perhaps through joint briefings preceded by consultations — to put out a common point of view.

The international media batten on the failures of an operation. They by and large ignore the successes unless they can be described as the developed world riding again to the rescue of an inept developing world. It would be good if the United Nations would do a bit more than it does now to project the success stories of peacekeeping operations, both to the developed world and in the developing world, from where it gets its peacekeepers. That might make TCCs feel more appreciated and encourage their Governments to continue to be responsive to the United Nations requests for their support.

Some of the other important issues raised in the paper circulated by the President are the commitment gaps in the contribution of troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations, the previous failures and shortcomings of such operations and the problems concerning the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers. On the issue of commitment gaps, the Brahimi Panel notes that in the last few years 77 per cent of the troops in formed military units deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations were contributed by developing countries. This is a sad commentary on the willingness of others to share in the collective responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, and especially on those who believe they carry the primary responsibility in this regard as enshrined in Article 24 of the Charter.

Volumes can be written on the previous failures and shortcomings of United Nations peacekeeping operations. However, even a cursory reading of the Rwanda and Srebrenica reports, and that of the Eisele assessment team that visited Sierra Leone last year, is revealing. I have had occasion to address this issue in my statement on peacekeeping before the Fourth Committee on 9 November, as well as before the Council on 15 November last year during the open debate on the subject of "No exit without strategy". The lack of political will, an unrepresentative Council distanced from ground realities when mandating peacekeeping operations without taking the views of troop-contributing countries into account, unwise reliance on regional solutions, a commitment gap resulting in the United Nations accepting inadequate units as a matter of political expediency, and a financially burdened Organization trying to overreach itself are, in summary, the crux of the problems confronting United Nations peacekeeping.

The safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers is an issue of crucial importance to all, particularly to troop contributing countries. More than 100 Indian peacekeepers have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of the United Nations.

Troop contributors deploy their personnel in peacekeeping missions aware of the risks involved. But it is our bounden duty to ensure the safety and security of our peacekeepers, and we should leave no stone unturned in this regard. The best insurance against such risks is a properly planned and mandated mission, comprising well-trained, equipped and disciplined contingents that are not deployed in a void in which the

political process is either non-existent or compromised for lesser interests, expressing the priorities of a few.

These problems can be tackled comprehensively only through a sustained and meaningful dialogue amongst the principal actors — the Council, the TCCs and the Secretariat. An institutionalized mechanism, comprising the main players, would provide an appropriate forum to seriously address these issues.

We are confident that under your active leadership the Council will not merely listen to the views that are being expressed by troop contributors today, but will seriously consider them in formulating a thought-through and result-seeking approach in addressing some of the most glaring lacunae in the way this Organization conducts peacekeeping operations.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of the Republic of Korea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): I would like to start by welcoming you, Minister Jayakumar, and congratulate Singapore for assuming this year's first turn of the presidency. Taking this opportunity, I also extend my delegation's congratulations to the other new members of the Council — namely, Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius and Norway. I firmly believe that they will make fresh contributions to the work of the Council.

The Republic of Korea has always been a strong advocate for strengthening the cooperation between the Council and troop-contributing countries (TCCs), both as a troop-contributing country itself and as a strong supporter of the reform process aimed at a more transparent and accountable Security Council. Currently we are witnessing a resurgence of United Nations peacekeeping operations, in which the role of the TCCs is increasingly gaining importance. Within this context, strengthened cooperation between the Council, the TCCs and the Secretariat will be an important platform from which to strengthen the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

In this regard, my delegation particularly appreciates Singapore's initiative in tabling this important agenda item before us today. Today's debate is all the more timely considering the strong political will to enhance United Nations peacekeeping activities that was manifested on the occasion of the Millennium

Summit, the submission of the Brahimi report and the subsequent efforts of the Security Council working group and of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations to review the report.

Against this backdrop my delegation wishes to comment on some of the issues to which it attaches particular importance.

When compared to the past, peacekeeping operations have changed not only in size and scope, but also in nature. As in the cases of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the character and mandate of the peacekeeping missions are evolving in order to adapt to the nature of crises and the current reality. More recently, the experience in Sierra Leone eloquently demonstrated the urgent need to upgrade the level of consultations with TCCs. Such developments call for a qualitative improvement in cooperation and coordination between the Council and TCCs.

It is our belief that the TCCs are still largely alienated from important stages of the decision-making processes. Despite their contribution of soldiers, equipment and much-needed resources, TCCs are offered limited chances to voice their concerns over important matters that directly affect the lives of their nationals and their contributions.

Hence, my delegation fully acknowledges the efforts of the Security Council, which in its resolution 1327 (2000) of 13 November 2000 underlined the importance of an improved system of consultations with TCCs and agreed to strengthen significantly the existing system of consultations. We also welcome the increasing recognition by the Council of the merits of interacting more frequently with TCCs. And yet, what matters is not the number of times TCCs are briefed or allowed to speak in the Council, but the degree to which they can substantially contribute to the decision-making process of peacekeeping operations.

Although we appreciate the efforts made by the Council and the Secretariat to continuously update TCCs on the current status of field missions, our own experience dictates that there is still room for the current TCC meetings to become more effective and interactive. TCC meetings should be more than a mere forum for TCCs to be briefed on past occurrences in the field. If, for instance, a structural change, downsizing or expansion of a peacekeeping operation

is expected, the Council should provide the relevant TCCs with the plan under consideration in a timely manner, to enable TCCs to prepare well in advance.

In this context, a more institutionalized mechanism should be considered to allow for genuine participation by TCCs. While fully acknowledging that peacekeeping missions are established by the sole authority of the Security Council, my delegation believes that the creation of such a mechanism would be a meaningful step towards enhancing the overall capabilities of peacekeeping operations.

We also believe that the Council and the Secretary-General can collaborate more closely in the initial stage of planning in finding ways to provide prospective troop contributors with opportunities to participate. The enhancement of early-stage consultations will undoubtedly help remedy the commitment gaps as well as minimize failures.

The Brahimi report contains a number of useful recommendations and also covers the issue of cooperation with TCCs. My delegation believes that the impact of the report and the subsequent discussion it generated should be maintained and furthered. In this regard, we support the idea of establishing a subsidiary organ of the Council in an appropriate form, as provided for in Article 29 of the Charter. We also take note that the Secretary-General, in his report on the implementation of the Brahimi report, wholeheartedly concurred with the Panel's assessment that closer consultation between TCCs and the Security Council, including through a new mechanism, is needed.

The Republic of Korea is currently contributing 476 peacekeepers to various peacekeeping operation missions. My Government expects that its contribution to peacekeeping activities will become more substantial as its experiences grow. In financial terms, as a result of the recent agreement on the scale of assessments, Korea's increase in contribution in the coming years will be one of the largest among Member States.

My delegation reiterates its belief that the views of the Member States that are willing and able to contribute to peacekeeping should be respected and accommodated by the Council through the institutionalization of a consultation mechanism.

Several years have passed since the idea of the establishment of new mechanisms for strengthening

cooperation between the Council and TCCs was introduced. The time has come for the Council to consider appropriate actions without further delay.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for your leadership in initiating and convening this open meeting of the Council. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Singapore and the other new members, namely Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius and Norway, on joining the Council. We are convinced that each of the new members will make a great contribution to the activities of this important Organization by providing it with fresh thoughts and perspectives.

Japan has been strongly committed to, and actively engaged in, efforts to strengthen the cooperation between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries, with the involvement of the Secretariat. For example, when Japan occupied the presidency of the Security Council in April 1998, it was instrumental in setting a precedent for convening a meeting of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations with the President of the Council, to discuss ways to improve the meeting of the troop-contributing countries.

Today I would like to focus on one new aspect of this long-debated and complex issue: that is, the need to broaden the scope of participants in consultations between the Security Council and troop contributors. I want to hasten to add here that it is crucially important for the Council to listen to the views of the countries that send their troops and police elements to the field.

As we all know, the maintenance of peace and security now requires a comprehensive approach, one that includes efforts in the economic, social and humanitarian areas on top of the traditional peacekeeping operations, which encompass military and police activities. This is reflected in the multifaceted mandates of recent peacekeeping operations, which often include tasks having to do with nation-building, governance and development. These large-scale, comprehensive missions tend to be funded by voluntary contributions by interested Member States, in addition to assessed contributions.

In such multifaceted operations, the civilian component is often substantial. A case in point is the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), where a third of the military and civilian police personnel deployed in the operation are civilians.

It stands to reason that in such multifaceted operations, consultations between the Security Council and contributing countries should not be limited to those countries providing military and civilian police personnel. Rather, they should be open to those countries that provide civilian personnel; countries whose nationals are engaged in humanitarian activities on the margins of the operation; countries that have made major financial contributions or provided key elements or expertise; and countries that are particularly knowledgeable about the situation on the ground.

These countries have a great deal at stake in the conduct and outcome of peacekeeping operations. The safety and security of personnel is of no less serious concern to the countries that have provided civilian personnel than it is to those that have provided military personnel. Countries that have made major financial contributions to the operations are held accountable by their taxpayers. Indeed, because today's operations are increasingly linked to the post-conflict peace-building agenda such as nation-building and development, peacekeeping operations themselves will be strengthened if all major contributing countries participate in the consultations with the Security Council.

This need to include non-troop-contributing countries in Security Council consultations is reflected in previous statements and notes of the President of the Council, such as S/1998/1016 and S/PRST/1996/13. Japan, for one, strongly believes that it is important to stress this need again in our deliberations today on strengthening the cooperation between the Council and troop-contributing countries.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Australia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Stuart (Australia): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council. Australia looks forward to working closely with Singapore and, indeed, with the other new

members of the Council that have begun their terms this month.

We welcome in particular the opportunity to contribute to this debate and commend Singapore's initiative in convening it. The issue of strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries is an important one for all Member States and a key element in improving the overall effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping.

The need to consult with contributors or potential contributors of troops to United Nations operations was recognized in the Charter. Over the last decade or so, the growing demands and complexity of such operations has led Member States to give more attention to improving consultation between the Council and troop contributors. The Council's track record in this area has, however, been a mixed one. It was therefore a welcome development when the Brahimi report on United Nations peace operations gave renewed emphasis to the importance of timely and effective consultation with troop contributors.

This has also been a prominent theme of the reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations in recent years, including its report to the General Assembly of 4 December on the Brahimi report. Indeed, during the course of the Special Committee's deliberations at its extraordinary session last year, there was probably no other issue that enjoyed such strong and broad support.

There is a direct correlation between the willingness of the Security Council and the Secretariat to share information and their thinking with troop contributors, and the degree of confidence that Governments have in the concept of operations, planning and management of proposed peacekeeping missions. This should not lead us to assume that an improvement in the frequency and quality of consultation with Member States will necessarily translate into an increase in participation rates in peacekeeping operations. Governments will always make decisions to participate, or not to participate, on the basis of a number of considerations, and there will continue to be operations where the perceived level of risk or other factors will deter some from contributing troops.

That being said, the absence of effective consultation will almost certainly result in potential contributors turning away because of lack of

information or lack of opportunity to contribute to the development of a concept of operations or a Council mandate. This can serve only to complicate the task of both the Council and commanders in the field.

We see two essential elements to more effective consultation and cooperation with troop contributors: two-way communication and timeliness. Meaningful consultations require active listening by all parties. It is not sufficient to go through the motions of a consultative process that amounts to little more than troop contributors being informed of Secretariat planning or the Council's position. All parties stand to gain from an effective two-way dialogue, not least Council members and military planners in the Secretariat who can benefit from the input of Member States, which will not only have legitimate concerns as troop contributors, but in many cases also have expertise in the theatre of operation that can greatly assist the planning process.

The timing of consultations is critical. Prior consultations should be regarded as indispensable in situations where the Council is changing the status of an existing operation or amending rules of engagement. Failing to consult Governments that have troops on the ground in such circumstances would be, in effect, a breach of faith. Consultations should also precede the establishment of a mandate — in that case, involving potential troop contributors — and consultations should be a part of the process of developing and refining the concept of operation for a mission.

We recognize that the Council often faces pressures to make speedy decisions and must balance a range of conflicting considerations and national positions. In looking at ways to strengthen the consultation process, we do not advocate burdensome processes or structures that would undercut the Council's ability to make effective and timely decisions.

Finding the right balance presents a challenge — for the Council, the Secretariat and Member States — which will require that all parties approach consultations in a constructive way. On the one hand, if the Council hosts consultations which do no more than present troop-contributing countries with faits accomplis, the process will be undermined; on the other hand, if troop contributors were to use the process cynically or were to hold up decision-making without regard to broader interests, this would also do

peacekeeping a disservice. It is crucial, therefore, that all parties concerned approach the consultation process in a cooperative spirit.

It would be remiss not to acknowledge that some improvements have been made over the years. We commend in particular the effort of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to enhance the frequency and the quality of its consultations with troop contributors, including the recent initiative to issue briefing notes when the issues are complex or unfamiliar. These have been worthwhile steps in the right direction.

We again thank you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Singapore for initiating debate on this important topic, and we look forward to contributing to further work on it.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Fiji. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Naidu (Fiji): Allow me to warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the Council and your assumption of the presidency during the first month of your membership. I would also like to take this opportunity to warmly congratulate Colombia, Ireland, Mauritius and Norway on their election to the Council.

The Government of Fiji takes heart from this open debate as the event that may consolidate past reflections and initiatives on how to rejuvenate United Nations peacekeeping operations 23 years after their inception. Belying its smallness and modest resources, Fiji has been a troop contributor throughout this period — in military and civilian police operations in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and, most recently, in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Fiji has also served in other non-United Nations missions, including in the Sinai, in Bougainville and in Rhodesia. The total strength of Fiji contingents serving in all these missions numbers close to 900 at the present time. Fiji's broad-based experience, as I have listed, includes personnel serving at all levels in peacekeeping activities — field and force commanders, as well as soldiers and officers.

The initiative of the Singapore Mission in bringing about this debate during its term of presidency on the Security Council enables my Government to participate and share its concerns and thoughts on this vital United Nations responsibility and obligation for global peace and security.

Fiji also acknowledges and endorses the various initiatives taken in Security Council presidential statements 1994/62 and 1996/13, the far-reaching findings of the Brahimi Panel report and Security Council resolution 1327 (2000).

Fiji specifically commends the Secretary-General's personal role in and attendance at the recent signing of the memorandum of understanding between Ethiopia and Eritrea. That defining event signals a welcome attitudinal and institutional change in the *modus operandi* of peacekeeping operations.

On the other hand, Fiji's experience in UNIFIL was quite different, as, indeed, were other missions in which Fiji was not involved; they were fraught with danger and frustrations for all troop-contributing countries (TCCs) due to the lack of a formal peace agreement between the warring parties. The evident lack of political will to prevail upon all parties concerned to honour the terms of the UNIFIL mandate precipitated that situation. Inevitably, some contingents withdrew. The security zone in southern Lebanon endured protracted occupation until June 2000, and UNIFIL's ability to function effectively in its area of operations was severely undermined. Regrettably for TCCs, throughout such difficulties there is no available mechanism through which to air and channel misgivings or concerns.

We do not wish to belabour the issue in detail at this stage, but would simply like to seize this opportunity, as a small developing TCC, to call for improved cooperation and greater consultation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries, with a view to strengthening peacekeeping operations. In our genuine desire to be team players, we are fully confident that our peacekeeping experiences, losses and gains can legitimately inform us in this process.

Fiji has frequently noted its heavy human losses in peacekeeping operations, now numbering 37. UNIFIL alone has consumed at least 250 lives of service personnel in its 23 years of operation. This is an unacceptable casualty figure in peacekeeping terms.

In whatever mission, it remains important that warring parties are held accountable for such casualties.

Through the United Nations Tribunals and internationally recognized courts, including the new International Criminal Court when it is formally instituted, Fiji is confident that the loss of lives in all peacekeeping missions can be minimized and those responsible properly brought to justice. This will give credibility to the international mechanisms that are put in place for these specific objectives to strengthen peacekeeping operations and deter would-be violators of operations mandated by the Security Council.

Strengthened peacekeeping also presupposes the legal obligation of a host country, on whose invitation United Nations intervention was provided, to resolve or manage conflict, to assist the United Nations peacekeeping operation and to honour such a commitment for the continuation of the operation in its territory. A lapse in this commitment should automatically lead to the non-renewal of the force mandate or to the withdrawal of a mission.

My Government has also pondered seriously the reimbursement procedures, which weigh heavily against us in causing severe budgetary constraints. Analysing the disadvantages of the present procedure and finding constructive remedies thereto are critical steps to strengthening peacekeeping operations. We endure counter-productive lags under this reimbursement system. The system diminishes the ability of Governments such as my own to commit their finances towards areas of greater need for effective discharge of these operations.

For Fiji, acquisition of appropriate armoury to adequately equip our troops for the missions is a strain. A more viable option is for the United Nations to procure armoury through the tendering and bulk purchasing scheme at a more reasonable cost than that which individual troop contributing countries (TCCs) like my own presently endure. This would considerably ease the responsibilities of TCCs while standardizing the required equipment levels at each mission.

Strengthened peacekeeping demands that we go beyond closer consultations between TCCs, the Security Council and the Secretariat. Consultations must be in good time. Meetings must also of necessity be interactive and productive, with the capacity to regularly monitor and review reports on various missions for Security Council members, non-members

and TCCs alike. It is important to institutionalize this consultation mechanism.

To achieve this objective, we must realize the challenge of the Brahimi recommendation for the convening of a Security Council special sub-committee to take up some of the professional and detail points with which technocrats and strategists can best equip us. Only then can a decision be taken whether to deploy, renew or withdraw a mission or merely to amend the relevant mandate. All linkages can thus be maintained and overhauled to adopt a realistic process that is based on an objective assessment of the actual situations on the ground.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of South Africa. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Ndhlovu (South Africa): May I begin by congratulating Singapore on assuming the presidency of the Security Council. I also extend my delegation's congratulations to the other new members of the Council.

My delegation also wishes to commend you, Mr. President, for preparing an excellent discussion paper, which certainly highlights the most important aspects requiring our ongoing focus and attention.

Part of the problem that has beset United Nations peacekeeping in the last few years, and most recently demonstrated by events in Sierra Leone, has been the lack of coordination between key role-players. My delegation has therefore welcomed the Brahimi report's recommendations, which focused on this particular problem. In light of recent discussions among Member States on the Brahimi report, the debate on this theme could not have come at a more opportune time.

Meaningful consultations between the Council, troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and the Secretariat form an important part of coordination and cooperation, which are an essential requirement for the successful implementation of peacekeeping mandates and the overall efforts to improve United Nations peacekeeping. South Africa's policy of participation in peace missions identifies the need for consultations on peacekeeping mandates as an important determining factor for our effective participation in peacekeeping operations. Consequently, my delegation has, on various occasions, underlined the need for the creation

of a system of more meaningful consultations between TCCs and the Council during all phases of peacekeeping operations, from conceptualization to termination.

My delegation was therefore pleased to note the adoption of resolution 1327 (2000) of 13 November 2000, in which the Council commits itself to significantly strengthen the existing system of consultations at the various phases of a peacekeeping operation. We are particularly pleased that the Council has acknowledged that consultations may now be initiated by troop contributors, because this increases the opportunities to hold such consultations. Furthermore, the recommendations of the Special Committee on this question certainly complement and build on the provisions of resolution 1327 (2000), and we hope that the Council will implement them. Of particular importance to us in this regard is the need to adhere to the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter when the use of force is authorized by the Council.

You rightly point out, Mr. President, that the above-mentioned improvements to the system of consultations are part of an ongoing process which was initiated almost a decade ago. The practice has, however, almost never accorded with the spirit of the commitment to enhanced consultation. The momentum created by the Brahimi report thus needs to be sustained to ensure that consultations are not pseudo-consultations, but that they provide for real interaction. They must become the platform for a genuine exchange of views during which key role-players can express their concerns and interests. The quality aspect of consultations also places particular responsibility on the Secretariat to improve access to information in order to facilitate a free exchange of views between TCCs and the Council.

In the discussion paper, a pertinent issue is raised regarding the sufficiency of the current arrangements for consultations. My delegation believes that the Brahimi report's recommendation on subsidiary bodies, in accordance with Article 29 of the Charter of the United Nations, remains valid and should be pursued in the Council's efforts to continually improve the system of consultations.

In conclusion, I would like to reassure the Security Council that South Africa remains ready to participate in the promotion of peace and security

around the world. President Mbeki summed up South Africa's role in peacekeeping when he said:

"Our men and women from our National Defence Force have been selected to serve with United Nations peacekeepers in the Congo, Ethiopia and Eritrea and may be called upon to assist in Sierra Leone. None of us will ever forget the extraordinary humanitarian work our Air Force did to rescue 15,000 flood-stricken Mozambicans. Many of us will not be aware of the subsequent work done by our Air Force to distribute ballot papers in Mozambique, as our contribution to that country's efforts to consolidate its democracy. We salute that distinguished South African, Nelson Mandela, who has spared no effort to bring about peace to the sister republic of Burundi and wish him success in his difficult task."

The President: Let me make a procedural announcement. We intend to suspend the morning session of this meeting at around 1 p.m. We hope that this will give sufficient time to Council members to reflect on the views expressed by the troop-contributing countries before they respond at 3 p.m. today. As I announced at the outset of today's meeting, after the Council members have spoken we will hear the views of other Member States that are inscribed to speak.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Argentina. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (spoke in Spanish): I wish to express my delegation's pleasure at seeing you, Sir, presiding over this debate. I congratulate your country for having raised this subject for discussion by the Security Council. I also take this opportunity to commend my friends, representatives in this Council, with whom I had the privilege to work when my country was a member of the Council until 31 December last year, and to welcome the new members who joined this year.

The need to strengthen cooperation with troop-contributing countries cannot be denied, since there are 16 peacekeeping operations and about 40,000 Blue Helmets deployed throughout the world. For Argentina, this issue is of special interest, not only because these operations are important to the Organization, but also because Argentina is the main troop contributor from Latin America and participates in 10 of the 16

operations I referred to, in the course of which it has lost 20 of its nationals. That is why, given the importance of this subject, in 1994, my country, as a member of the Security Council, together with New Zealand, gave impetus to the adoption of the presidential statement that formalized the consultation process among the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries.

In 1994 and later in 1996, with great effort, the criteria and framework to formalize a consultation process with troop contributors were determined. On this basis, the relationship was strengthened. Seven years later, however, we must recognize that many of the concerns then enunciated are still current. We feel that this is a problem not of principles, but of implementation. That is why we believe that many of those concerns could be solved in 2001 if the presidential statements were fully implemented. Let me mention some examples.

The 1994 statement stipulates that the meetings among the members of Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat should be held well before the adoption by the Council of decisions on the extension, termination or modification of the mandate of a peacekeeping operation. In practice, during the two years we were members of the Council, we noted that those meetings were mostly held a few days before the adoption of the decision by the Council. Even on those occasions, the meeting was held when the negotiating process on the draft resolution had already begun or was at an advanced stage. All this sometimes helps to make those meetings a mere formality, obviating their main goal of alerting the Council in advance of the concerns, interests and potential limitations of the troop contributors, so that these may be taken into account when the decision is made.

Another stipulation is that meetings be held with special representatives of the Secretary-General and force commanders. In 1999 and 2000, such meetings were the exception, not the rule, in spite of the importance of receiving direct information from those who are in the field when, for instance, the modification of the mandate is foreseen.

One last example that we would like to cite is the possibility for other concerned countries also to participate in the meetings held with troop-contributing countries. We refer specifically to the operation's host

country and to the countries especially affected in the region where the operation takes place. On the basis of the circumstances of each particular case, we think that this alternative should be explored.

The essential question is: Why have these provisions either not been implemented or been implemented erratically and partially? There is probably more than one reason. Let me share some of them.

First, the members of the Council, especially the permanent members, may fear that their decision-making power will be weakened or that States that are not members of the Council will impose conditions on the implementation. Secondly, there may be an insufficiency of staff or resources in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. Thirdly, some troop-contributing countries may not be interested in participating more actively in the meetings. In order to overcome those fears and weaknesses and to make the relationship among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat genuinely fluid in practice, I would make the following observations.

There is no doubt that the Security Council has exclusive decision-making power. It is also true, however, that the Council's decisions directly affect troop contributors, since the risks of the operation fall mainly on their shoulders. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone is a clear example of this. In that case, the Council decided to change the mandate of the operation after its establishment and to place parts of the mandate under Chapter VII. There is therefore a duty to provide transparency and to apprise troop-contributing countries of all necessary aspects so that they can undertake an objective analysis of a situation and take their own decisions as to whether to participate or to withdraw their contingents.

That duty to provide transparency is not limited to giving information, but also includes being receptive to the opinions and concerns of contributors. Should the Council not act in that fashion, there would be a risk that it might adopt mandates that could not be carried out due to contributors' belief that those mandates cannot be implemented in practice.

The Secretariat must be able to rely on sufficient human and financial resources. This is also related to the need for the Secretariat to be able to rely on its own sources of information as much as possible; otherwise,

there is a risk of communicating erroneous information and making inaccurate analyses.

It is important that troop-contributing countries appropriately follow up the development of a conflict and that they increase their participation in meetings so that such meetings can be interactive. Although such cases are very important, we do not believe that interest should be limited exclusively to cases in which the security of personnel has been violated — for instance, cases of the kidnapping of observers.

In conclusion, as we stated before the Council on 13 November 2000, at the time of the adoption of resolution 1327 (2000), on implementing the recommendations of the Brahimi report,

"We are pleased that the Council recognizes the importance of improving the existing mechanism for consultations with the troop-contributing countries and is to implement specific proposals in this regard. The message to this group of countries must be clear. We need to maintain an open line of mutual communication and to have interactive meetings where their concerns and interests can be expressed. Strengthening the consultation process implies, on the one hand, facilitating access to consultations, and, on the other, increasing the number of opportunities to hold them." (*S/PV.4220, p. 10*)

We made that statement because it would not be fair of us to fail to recognize that much has been done to strengthen cooperation among troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat, which are the three pillars of peacekeeping operations. However, there is still a long road ahead, one that will be easier if the Council has sufficient political will to make its decision-making process more transparent with regard to establishing, terminating or modifying the mandate of a peacekeeping operation.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Sweden. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Schori (Sweden): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you, and Singapore, on your role in the presidency and on the initiative you have taken. I would also like to thank the other members of the Council for this opportunity for us to speak today.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European Countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — as well as the associated countries of Cyprus and Malta align themselves with this statement.

The commitment of the European Union to the primary role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, and to the core function of peacekeeping, is evident in the contributions of troops, police officers, military observers and civilian personnel from the member States of the European Union to United Nations peacekeeping operations. The European Union also supports the Standby Arrangement System as an essential element in strengthening the United Nations peacekeeping capacity. In addition, the Union has thousands of men and women assigned to United Nations-mandated operations in the Balkans, where the European Union is by far the most important troop contributor, with its contribution representing approximately 60 per cent of the international effort on the ground. The share of the European Union member States for the United Nations peacekeeping budget is almost 40 per cent. By paying their assessed contributions on time and in full, they play a decisive role in ensuring that peacekeeping activities continue functioning smoothly.

The crisis-management capacity of the European Union is rapidly developing. The goal is to contribute effectively to the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Recognizing the primary responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, the European Union will continue to cooperate, in a mutually reinforcing manner, with the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe and other international organizations in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict resolution. In this context, the European Union has set itself the headline goal of being able by 2003 to deploy within 60 days, and sustain for at least one year, forces of up to 60,000 persons. The European Union also committed itself to providing by 2003, by way of voluntary cooperation, up to 5,000 police officers — 1,000 of them to be deployable within 30 days — for international missions across the full range of conflict-prevention and crisis-management operations.

At its meeting in Nice last month, the European Council confirmed its determination to continue strengthening the crisis management capabilities of the European Union in the military and civilian fields. The European Union intends to coordinate its activities closely with the United Nations principal organs, as well as with the OSCE and, in particular, the REACT special team and the Council of Europe. To this end, it was decided in Nice to identify possible areas and modalities of cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations in crisis management.

It is against this background that the European Union takes a keen interest in the cooperation between the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries. One of the priority issues for the European Union in the ongoing process to strengthen the United Nations activities for peace and security is the formulation of clear, credible and achievable mandates for peacekeeping operations. This objective implies, among other measures, a qualitative and quantitative improvement of consultations between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries, as well as greater transparency, a process which must be maintained throughout all phases of any peacekeeping operation, from the formulation of the mandate to its successful implementation. The European Union therefore welcomes the Security Council resolution 1327 (2000), which was adopted last November. It is a first and very important step in the right direction, consistent with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter.

The issue was also dealt with in the report of the recent extraordinary session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, which the General Assembly considered last month. The report emphasized the necessity of significantly strengthening and formalizing the consultation process between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries in order to make it more meaningful. Such an evolution would also encourage more countries to contribute in proportion with their capacities and to increase the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Similarly, the European Union believes that the planning process within the Secretariat can be made more effective, coherent and transparent. There is everything to be gained by involving troop-contributing countries in the early stages of planning new missions and throughout the lifetime of a mission,

particularly with regard to risk analysis and rules of engagement. In that context, the European Union would like to express its appreciation for the priority given to this issue by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno. The safety and security of peacekeeping personnel is a matter of utmost concern to all troop-contributing countries. Further measures in this regard should be developed as a priority.

Looking to the future, the European Union stands ready to consider positively other mechanisms that can strengthen the link between the Security Council and troop contributors. Among the ideas that could be considered is the proposal in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, the so-called Brahimi report, that troop-contributing countries' advice to the Security Council might usefully be institutionalized via the establishment of ad hoc subsidiary organs of the Council, as provided for in Article 29 of the Charter.

The European Union would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its support for the Brahimi report. We welcome the work that has already been carried out in order to implement its recommendations, inter alia, the partial strengthening of the Secretariat that can be achieved since the Fifth Committee gave its approval last month.

While welcoming these developments, the European Union underlines the importance it attaches to an appropriate organizational structure and staffing of the Secretariat. More is needed in order to provide the Secretariat with sufficient resources to enable it to carry out its missions. The EU looks forward to the comprehensive review of the management, structure, recruitment processes and interrelationships of elements in the Secretariat that deal with peacekeeping, and to a resumption of the consideration of the Brahimi report in the General Assembly later this year.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Sir, for the generous words you addressed to Canada and the other countries that have just left the Council. I would also like to say how pleased I am to see former colleagues on the Council and to welcome the new members.

I would also like to thank you for having taken this important initiative to improve the consultative arrangements with troop-contributing countries. My Government would also like to say how satisfied it is that the Council has responded so quickly and thoroughly to the Brahimi report, by adopting resolution 1327 (2000), which clearly underscores many of the concerns of troop-contributing countries.

(*spoke in English*)

In addition, in the course of the past decade the Security Council also issued two presidential statements on how consultations with troop-contributing countries were to be conducted. Regrettably, the principles inherent in these statements have not been fully respected in the intervening years. But even if they had been respected, the communication of information to troop contributors would not have proved adequate in practice. The issue is not communications or consultations, although even here improvements are possible; the issue is cooperation and participation.

We collectively have not found a way for troop-contributing countries to be part of the Organization's peace operation decision-making process, from the start of a mission to its conclusion. It is time for us all to take stock of our collective experience. There is plenty of evidence to show that consultations by the Council with troop-contributing countries are necessary, but not sufficient. Troop contributors' views are not simple inputs to a decision of the Council; they are integral to effective decisions and must carry their full weight.

Any decision-making process that merely takes or leaves troop contributors' views risks alienating those Governments and exposing a mission to failure. In the course of last autumn, two major troop-contributing countries withdrew from the United Nations largest peace operation, at least in part, they have said, because they did not feel their views were heard and heeded.

The Security Council and the Secretariat must be able to win the confidence of troop-contributing Governments — Governments that put their soldier-citizens in harm's way — that the strategy and concept of operations for a new mission, and their implementation, are sound. Troop-contributing Governments must also be confident that they will be sending troops or police to serve within a competent

mission with effective leadership. That confidence comes from cooperation and participation, not notification and not even just consultations.

We need to think corporately about the relationship between the Council and troop contributors. We need to find a way to bring the latter into the decision-making processes of the former. We are all on the same side on this issue: the side of United Nations effectiveness.

Under Article 23 of the Charter, the Council bears the primary constitutional responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, and it has often been observed that it does not bear the exclusive responsibility. Strengthening peace operations is a challenge we all face. It should not be beyond the ingenuity of United Nations Members to find an effective way forward. If Council members are unwilling to share power, they then should take upon themselves the responsibility of providing the troops required. If, on the other hand, potential or actual troop-contributing countries are unable to rally to a consensus, then they should draw the appropriate conclusion.

During the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, Canada tabled a study that offered concrete recommendations on rapid reaction to crisis situations. The study recognized the need for a partnership between the Security Council and troop contributors and the Secretariat. Specifically, we suggested that the Security Council and troop contributors establish a joint committee for each peace operation. This idea, we believe, remains valid. I am mindful that in 1996 — for the abortive Zaire operation, which was led by Canada — we did collectively create such a committee. There was a nucleus established to manage and give direction to the mission, and it was, as long as the operation lasted, a successful initiative.

The Council and troop contributors, supported by the Secretariat, must work in partnership in a spirit of cooperation within an integrated management framework, rather than simply meet on occasion for what has largely become a pro forma bit of theatre.

We have heard many good ideas this morning, including those discussed in considerable detail by the Permanent Representative of India. In the next few days, we, Canada, will be circulating a paper that expands on some of our ideas about the next steps that the Council might consider taking in order to enhance

cooperative arrangements. There is much that it is the same in the Indian and Canadian approaches.

We hope that the Council and troop contributors will find that these proposals are worth serious consideration. Six years after the adoption of the presidential statement I mentioned at the beginning, we endorse the Council's implicit conclusion today: that it is time to address today's needs. Failure to do so will only make it more difficult for the United Nations to respond in a timely and effective fashion when peace missions are needed. Success in doing so would help us all establish a decision-making process that integrates authority and risk. More fundamentally, doing so will help the United Nations meet the great expectations of so many people around the world who, now and in the future, depend on the United Nations — that is to say, depend on us.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Bebars (Egypt) (spoke in Arabic): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on the assumption of your country, Singapore, to the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. I should like also to congratulate your country and the other new members of the Council and to wish them success in the discharge of their mandate over the next two years.

Let me also thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting in order to address the urgent issue of enhancing the relationship and consultations between the troop-contributing countries and the Security Council, as this is a key element that must be addressed in the context of ongoing efforts in order to enhance the role and effectiveness of the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping.

This meeting, in our view, has a special significance, not only because it is the first of its kind, but also because it is being convened in the wake of the issuance of the Brahimi report and of the experience of many troop-contributing countries with the Council with respect to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone during the crisis that erupted in Sierra Leone last May.

The delegation of Egypt would like on this occasion to make the following remarks regarding the issue under discussion today, especially in view of

Egypt's longstanding and far-reaching experience in the area of contributing to United Nations peacekeeping operations, which it has been doing since 1960.

First, the goal of strengthening the relationship between the troop-contributing countries and the Security Council must be approached with a view to achieving optimum streamlining and harmonization in the work of the Organization with respect to the settlement of disputes. It is therefore necessary, as we have indicated in more than one forum, to institutionalize the consultation process between the troop-contributing countries and the Council at all stages of the evolution of an operation's mandate and in all steps taken by the Council to amend, review, extend or terminate such mandate and the functions that accompany it.

These consultations must apply to the potential troop-contributing countries at advanced stages, following the submission by the Secretary-General to the Council of his proposals on the establishment and deployment of a peacekeeping operation. This would be more likely to ensure a clear and implementable mandate.

Secondly, the ultimate goal, which we are all trying to attain, should go beyond merely listening to and exchanging views with the troop-contributing countries, even if that process takes place through the institutionalized modality that we are calling for.

The agreed measures to strengthen the relationship between the troop-contributing countries and the Security Council should lead to the participation by those countries in the Council's decision-making process at all stages of the establishment, deployment and withdrawal of a peacekeeping operation, especially when the use of force is involved, as provided for clearly in Article 44 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Regrettably, a wide gap remains between the demands of the troop-contributing countries, which insist on this position, and the stance taken by the Security Council, which remains convinced that the purpose of consolidating consultations is — and I quote here from resolution 1327 (2000) —

“to foster a common understanding of the situation on the ground, of the mission's mandate

and of its implementation” (*S/RES/1327, annex, part I, fifteenth paragraph*).

Thirdly, when the Security Council understands that it cannot continue to refuse the legitimate requests of the troop-contributing countries to participate in the decision-making process within this forum, and when the Council recognizes that it can no longer disregard the views of countries that are willing to put the lives of their children in harm's way in order to implement a military mission which, as defined by the Council, involves a high level of risk and the use of force — only then can we establish the kind of relationship to which we all aspire between the Council and the troop-contributing countries. This would avert repetition the consequences that the absence of such a relationship has had in the past. Only then will we be able to overcome a most negative aspect that casts its shadow on the world Organization's discharge of its responsibilities in the area of peacekeeping.

Fourthly, despite the fact that the Council has recently developed the notion of holding “private” meetings with the troop-contributing countries as an innovative mechanism to listen to their views and observations, nonetheless we maintain that well-established modalities must be institutionalized to regulate these consultations. Such meetings should not be convened only when the Council decides to dispatch a mission composed of its members to a country that hosts a peacekeeping operation, or merely to brief the troop-contributing countries on the outcome of such a mission upon their return to Headquarters.

Furthermore, we demand that the Council respond to any request by a troop-contributing country to convene such a meeting, especially in cases where the Council is considering the amendment or review of a given peacekeeping mandate, or when there is a significant deterioration of security conditions in the region where the mission is operating that would jeopardize the safety and security of its personnel.

The delegation of Egypt believes that Security Council resolution 1327 (2000) represents a positive step forward in this context. It hopes that the Council will take the subsequent logical step of agreeing on well-defined modalities that govern the way these consultations are conducted as well as take into account the aforementioned points and put them into practice.

We commend you once again, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and for allowing the troop-contributing countries to make their observations before Council members speak. Allow me in closing to stress that strengthening the relationship between the troop-contributing countries and the Council is but one of the key elements that must be addressed in the framework of our collective efforts and shared responsibilities with a view to reforming peacekeeping operations.

Now that the General Assembly has adopted specific recommendations to reinforce the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other divisions within the Secretariat that are concerned with the maintenance of international peace and security, two main issues remain that require adequate attention.

First, all States must pay their assessed dues and arrears to the United Nations budget, so that peacekeeping operations will stand on a solid financial basis that will ensure the provision of the necessary military and logistical requirements for troops participating in operations.

Secondly, the major Western Powers should reconsider their position of abstaining from participation in certain peacekeeping operations, especially in the African continent, under the pretext that such operations, from their perspective, involve an unacceptable level of risk.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Zambia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Musambachime (Zambia): At the outset, my delegation would like to congratulate the new non-permanent members of the Security Council. We are confident that they will be able to make an important contribution to the work of the Council. My delegation wishes also to express its deep appreciation to the outgoing non-permanent members of the Council for the exemplary manner in which they discharged their responsibilities.

Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January 2001, the start of the new millennium. I would also like to put on record my country's appreciation for the initiative to hold this meeting today. We could not agree more that this is an appropriate moment to review measures that could be

taken to strengthen the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping operations. It is also a time to take advantage of the support and enthusiasm generated by the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations.

In contributing to today's debate, I will confine my remarks to two points: first, the need for peacekeeping operations to have clear, credible and achievable mandates and adequate resources, and secondly, the need for greater cooperation and closer and meaningful consultations between the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries.

While encouraged with the Security Council's resolve to give peacekeeping operations clear, credible and achievable mandates, we have been disappointed to note that the question of adequate resources for these operations seems to have received very little attention. The non-availability of adequate resources has led to the failure of a number of peacekeeping operations in the developing world, especially in Africa. My delegation therefore strongly appeals to the Security Council to seriously address this question.

Let me commend the members of the Security Council for accepting the Brahimi Panel recommendations on consultations with troop-contributing countries. We are encouraged by the fact that they underlined the importance of an improved system of consultation among the troop-contributing countries, the Secretary-General and the Security Council.

Although we welcome the steps taken so far by the Security Council, we believe that they fall far short of what was envisaged in the Brahimi report or, indeed, what we, the troop-contributing countries, would like to see.

The Security Council should involve the troop-contributing countries in the consultation process in a manner that is institutional and meaningful. This process should start at the earliest stage of drawing up a peacekeeping operation and should continue until its completion.

Paragraph 61 of the Brahimi report states that member countries contributing formed military units to an operation should be invited to attend Secretariat briefings of the Security Council pertaining to crises that affect the safety and security of the mission's personnel or to a change or reinterpretation of a

mission's mandate with respect to the use of force. My delegation wishes to state that whenever the use of peacekeeping forces is contemplated, the Security Council should adhere to the provisions of Article 43 and Article 44 of the United Nations Charter.

We welcome the efforts being made by the Security Council on consultations. However, we feel that a lot more should be done to make them more meaningful. The involvement of troop-contributing countries in the planning and implementation stages could go a long way in improving the conduct of peacekeeping operations.

The consultations with Security Council members held before and after the missions to Sierra Leone and East Timor were very useful. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the traditional troop-contributors meetings held to discuss the Secretary-General's reports.

My delegation wishes to echo the sentiments expressed by other delegations that, regardless of the provisions of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, neither traditional troop-contributors meetings nor private formal meetings should be held in the Council Chamber. They should be in a format that allows a free exchange of views between the Council members and the troop-contributing countries, and they should include the necessary substantive briefings.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mackay (New Zealand): It is a great pleasure to see you in the Chair, Mr. President. I want first to compliment you and the Singapore delegation for convening today's meeting on this important topic, as well as for your innovation in permitting non-members to speak first. Hopefully, this initiative will indeed promote greater interactivity.

Ambassador Mahbubani has asked us to keep our statements short and punchy, and I will try to oblige. I want to explain briefly why New Zealand takes a particular interest in this subject and what we would like to see by way of an outcome.

As Ambassador Listre of Argentina has mentioned before me, New Zealand and Argentina, while serving together on the Security Council in 1994, were perhaps pioneers in seeking the institutionalization of procedures to provide for

appropriate consultation with Members outside the Council. Our joint letter to the President of the Council on 18 September 1994 (S/1994/1063) got the ball rolling and led to the institutionalization of the procedures set out in the presidential statement of 4 November 1994 (S/PRST/1994/62).

We sought these improvements because of our commitment to the key United Nations role in the maintenance of international peace and security and because of our concern to see the Organization do better in the face of some very great challenges at the time. That commitment has never diminished. New Zealand has been a willing contributor to United Nations operations for half a century. Our current level of contribution to United Nations peacekeeping is the highest ever. Over 30 per cent of the New Zealand army is at present involved in peacekeeping. We are represented in operations in Asia, Africa and Europe, with our biggest single contribution being a battalion group in East Timor.

We approach the question of strengthening cooperation with troop contributors, therefore, with strong credentials, we believe, and from the perspective that the Charter guarantees, under Article 44, those troop contributors who are not members of the Council the right to be heard by the Council, at the very least. As others have noted, the Charter speaks of troop contributors being invited to participate in the decisions of the Security Council concerning the employment of their contingents. This must be our starting point in considering the possible establishment of new mechanisms and the procedural issues that flow therefrom. We firmly believe that this Article must be given due weight in United Nations peacekeeping in the twenty-first century.

On paper, things have come a long way since 1994. Resolution 1327 (2000), adopted just two months ago by way of follow-up to the Brahimi Report, speaks of strengthening significantly the existing system of consultations through the holding of private meetings with troop-contributing countries. Even before that resolution was adopted, we were greatly encouraged by the private meeting between the Council and troop contributors to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), which was held on 4 October last year. We very much hope that the format of this meeting might serve as a model for the implementation of private meetings in accordance with resolution 1327 (2000).

Among the key features of that 4 October meeting were the provision of an excellent briefing by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno on the current political framework, a first-class military appreciation of the situation facing UNAMSIL, presented by Major-General Ford, and the readiness of the Council President at the time, Ambassador Andjaba of Namibia, to see a free and frank exchange of views among the participants. The content of troop-contributor meetings must be well prepared, as it was in this case. In particular, if the Council is to consider any proposals to alter significantly the mandate or the size of a force, we, for one, would expect a fuller military appreciation to be provided to Council members and to troop contributors in just such a meeting, and we have heard here today from a number of other troop contributors who very clearly share this view.

Timeliness is also an essential requirement if meetings between the Council and troop contributors are to have value. May we applaud your efforts, Mr. President, for the way in which you have scheduled troop-contributor meetings for the four operations whose mandates expire this month — the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia — well in advance of Council consideration.

The strengthening of cooperation with troop contributors is of very great importance to our capitals, especially as United Nations operations grow more complex and more hazardous. We must be able to demonstrate to our parliaments and to our publics that we have an avenue to contribute to decisions that affect our servicemen and women. Equally, in these days when only a few Council members can be counted among the major troop-contributing countries to United Nations operations, there would seem to be an imperative for Council members to seek the views of troop contributors, especially on issues concerning the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers. As my delegation argued in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations as far back as April 1994, there is a direct correlation between the willingness of Member States to commit personnel to United Nations operations and the level of comfort with mechanisms in place for consultation.

Finally, comment has been sought on the idea of establishing a special subcommittee of the Council on peacekeeping operations. We recall that the Brahimi report indeed suggested, in paragraph 61, that troop-contributor advice to the Security Council might usefully be institutionalized through the establishment of ad hoc subsidiary organs of the Council. We believe that a formal committee should in fact be established. The committee, chaired by the President, should comprise all the members of the Council and every Member State which is contributing formed units to the peacekeeping operation on the committee's agenda. The committee would have a regular cycle of meetings, as well as being convened to discuss new deployments, new mandates and other significant changes to an operation, including troop reductions. There might well be scope for an informal subcommittee, perhaps meeting at the expert level with officials of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, to assist the committee. We hope these ideas can be taken further.

In sum, we congratulate you, Mr. President, on using your office this month to focus on an issue of very great interest to the wider membership. You have shown by example how the Council's business can be managed in a way which provides for the interests of troop contributors to be properly taken into account. We look forward to contributing further where we can to concrete recommendations which will lead to a better relationship between the body charged with maintaining international peace and security on our behalf and those countries that predominantly provide the means to carry out its decisions.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): Mr. President, I should like at the outset to extend my delegation's heartiest congratulations to you on Singapore's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January and to express my pleasure at seeing you preside over the meeting of the Council today. We commend you and your delegation for organizing this timely debate as a useful follow-up to previous deliberations in the Council on this subject. I should also like to pay tribute to Ambassador Lavrov of the Russian Federation for his effective leadership of the Council last month. I am equally pleased to greet the new members of the Council, as well as, of course, my

former colleagues on the Council, and to wish them every success.

I should like to thank Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani for providing the extremely useful background paper to assist us in preparing our participation in the debate. I also appreciate the fact that we, the non-members of the Council, are being heard before the members of the Council. We commend the Singapore presidency for pushing through this welcome, innovative approach. As Ambassador Mahbubani pointed out in his letter to the Secretary-General of 8 January 2001, the need was clearly felt for greater consultation between troop-contributing countries (TCCs), the Security Council and the Secretariat and that more could be done in this area. Indeed, this issue had been addressed on a number of occasions, both in the Council and the General Assembly. The Brahimi Panel on United Nations Peace Operations underscored this need for enhanced consultations and made a number of recommendations which had subsequently been endorsed by the Security Council and the General Assembly through Council resolution 1327 (2000) of 13 November 2000 and General Assembly resolution 55/135 of 8 December 2000.

Among these recommendations is that regarding the importance of continuous, focused and in-depth consultations between the Council and the TCCs that go beyond the regular TCC meetings presided over by the President of the Council. Like other countries that have participated in peacekeeping operations, Malaysia has always believed in the need for a formalized mechanism of consultations between the Council and TCCs to give effect to Article 44 of the Charter, which provides for the participation of TCCs in the decisions of the Council pertaining to peacekeeping operations in which their armed forces are involved. We have in the past referred to specific areas for further consultations, including, first, when the mandate of a new peacekeeping operation is being formulated; secondly, when the concept and/or plan of operation of a peacekeeping operation is being considered; thirdly, when the extension of the mandate of a peacekeeping operation is being considered; fourthly, when a substantive modification of the mandate of an existing peacekeeping operation — including the broadening or narrowing of its scope, changes in the rules of engagement and the introduction of new functions or components — is being considered; fifthly, when

significant developments occur which, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, members of the Security Council or troop contributors, are likely to affect materially the functioning of the operation and/or its ability to fulfil its mandate; and, finally, when the withdrawal, in whole or in part, of an operation is being considered.

While we continue to believe in the need for a subsidiary organ of the Council to coordinate consultations with the TCCs, we welcome the recently established mechanism of the so-called "private meetings" between the Council, the Secretariat and the TCCs as a step in the right direction. It is to be hoped that these meetings will be not merely briefing sessions, but serious discussions between Council members, TCCs and the Secretariat on the whole gamut of issues pertaining to specific peacekeeping operations. They should be held as often as necessary, but especially on those occasions which I enumerated earlier. We hope that this new mechanism will not be just an ad hoc arrangement, but will be formalized to give substance to the spirit of Article 44 of the Charter.

Notwithstanding the mechanism of the private meetings, there may be a need to maintain the mechanism of the regular TCC meetings to supplement the private meetings. However, the TCC meetings could be made more interactive and useful and less ritualistic if they were convened well ahead of the renewal of a peacekeeping operation, not just before, as is often the case. There should be, for the sake of greater transparency, an increased willingness to share information with troop-contributing countries about the situation on the ground. While the need for confidentiality is well appreciated, a lack of information very often leads to misinterpretation and even a distortion of events, with often negative reactions in the capitals of troop-contributing countries, especially in tense situations, as was the case in Sierra Leone. The situation is made worse when unconfirmed reports come directly from the ground from non-United Nations Secretariat sources. As in the case of the private meetings between the Council and troop-contributing countries, the challenge to make the TCC meetings more meaningful lies not only with the Council and the Secretariat, but also with the troop-contributing countries themselves.

On the issue of the commitment gaps in the contribution of troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations, there are several reasons for these, not the

least of which is the tardiness in reimbursing the costs of peacekeeping operations to developing countries, which creates difficulties, both economic and political, for the TCCs from the developing world. There is also the issue of the safety and security of troops in the peacekeeping areas of operation and the politically sensitive issue of acceptable risks, which potential troop-contributing countries have to grapple with before making a decision to commit troops. The problem is sometimes compounded by the very fluid situation on the ground. There is also the issue of the lack of adequate equipment and, sometimes, of training, which stands in the way of a quick and positive response to requests by the United Nations for troop contributions, particularly on the part of the developing countries.

More thought should be given to overcoming this problem of commitment gaps. Clearly, reimbursements should be made early and on time so as to generate the necessary political support in the potential troop-contributing countries concerned. Perhaps, with the resolution of the issue of the new scales of assessment, the problem will soon be resolved. As regards security, clearly, no Government would want to send its troops into harm's way and any Government would want assurances of an acceptable level of security before troops are committed. We trust that, under this new format of enhanced consultations, there will be a greater appreciation by the potential troop-contributing countries of the mandate for the peacekeeping operation in question, which can be facilitated by their more intimate involvement in the planning of that mandate.

On the issue of training and equipment, we feel that more could be done by the developed countries, in partnership with their counterparts in the developing world, which may have resources in terms of manpower but lack the wherewithal. Such logistical and training support from the developed countries could well enable developing countries to make their contribution to peacekeeping operations. However, this does not argue for a strict division of labour between the developed and developing countries, whereby the former provide the economic means for peacekeeping operations while the latter provide the manpower. United Nations peacekeeping is an international responsibility to be shared by all States Members of the Organization in all its aspects, but a case can, and has in fact been made, for logistical, training and other

technical support from the developed countries for potential troop contributors from the developing countries, even as the former participate actively themselves in peacekeeping operations.

There should be greater utilization of the stand-by arrangement between the United Nations Secretariat and potential troop-contributing countries. This arrangement should be strengthened, not only by involving more countries, but, more importantly, by tapping the resources available in those countries for current and future peacekeeping operations. The exercise undertaken by the Secretariat to audit and evaluate these assets is a welcome move in the right direction.

To fully utilize this standby arrangement, countries that have entered into such an arrangement should be given priority to participate in peacekeeping operations and their offers considered first before being turned down for specific reasons, which should be explained to the potential contributing countries. This would further bolster, rather than dampen, commitment to the stand-by arrangement. We would suggest that, following the ongoing auditing and evaluation exercise of these assets, serious efforts be made to evaluate and, where necessary, upgrade them to minimum United Nations standards through training and technical support from both the Secretariat and/or developed country partners so as to ensure their readiness for deployment for peacekeeping operations at the appropriate time. Perhaps, in this regard, serious consideration should be given not only to upgrading the United Nations Staff College in Turin, but also to establishing regional United Nations staff colleges to provide the necessary training to military officers of the TCCs, in addition to the ongoing support given to national peacekeeping centres. There are creative ways of establishing these staff colleges, in collaboration with Member States, without necessarily having to start from scratch. If appropriately provided with trained staff and utilized, these stand-by arrangements would be a good and relatively inexpensive substitute for that much-desired, but still elusive United Nations standing army that Brian Urquhart and others dreamed about.

My delegation would like to stress the importance of ensuring proper command and control as indispensable ingredients of the success of a peacekeeping operation. For this purpose, it is essential for troop-contributing countries, without exception, to accept the doctrine of unified United Nations command

in peacekeeping missions authorized by the Security Council. Malaysia's experience in various peacekeeping operations, especially in the United Nations Operation in Somalia II, which it had the honour to command, tells us that only effective command and control, backed by trained and professional staff, can guarantee the success of a peacekeeping operation. Any compromise on this all-important principle would be a recipe for disaster. In this regard, the selection of a highly qualified force commander with the right attributes is as important as the selection of a competent civilian head of a United Nations mission. To enable the force commander to fully appreciate the complexity of commanding United Nations troops on the ground, it is important that he, like his civilian head of mission, be given the opportunity to interact with Council members and the representatives of the troop-contributing countries through briefing sessions in New York.

Finally, my delegation wishes to underscore the need for objective and impartial assessments of situations on the ground and hence the importance of allowing the Secretariat to provide unvarnished and professional reports to Council members as well as to the TCCs. The TCCs, which provide the peacekeepers, have as much right as Council members to be adequately informed of developments that affect their personnel. It is important for the Council to send a message to the TCCs that their views are important in all matters pertaining to peacekeeping and that they are not taken for granted by the Council.

The President: The last speaker for this part of the meeting is the representative of Nigeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria): Permit me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your recent election to the Security Council and on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. My delegation has great confidence in your ability to effectively guide the Council during your presidency, and we want to assure you of our unwavering support.

The debate on strengthening cooperation with troop-contributing countries is as timely as it is appropriate. This is because during the Millennium Summit and the Millennium Assembly a lot of energy was devoted to the issue of peacekeeping operations and how to make them more effective. The Brahimi

Panel's report on peacekeeping operations generated significant interest among Member States and thereby renewed the momentum to push for strengthening the capacity of the United Nations peacekeeping operations. Both the Security Council and the General Assembly endorsed various recommendations of the Security Council working group and of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on the Panel's report. It is therefore commendable that the Council decided to debate under your presidency, Sir, the issues raised.

As a major troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations, Nigeria has always felt the need for better coordination and consultation between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat. This, in our view, is the best way to forge trust and understanding among the various stakeholders and to ensure the success of the various United Nations peacekeeping operations. While the Security Council may be responsible for issuing mandates, and the Secretariat may be responsible for logistics and administration through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, it is troop-contributing countries that actually translate Security Council mandates into action. It is their soldiers that are deployed in the field to face the dangers of war and, sometimes, to make the ultimate sacrifice in the process. It is therefore important that these three bodies continue to consult among themselves for the eventual success of any operation at hand.

War and conflict constitute a phenomenon that has been associated with the existence of homo sapiens. While time has changed the means and tools of war, the basic instinct of man's desire to overpower the other has remained unchanged. The creation of our Organization, the United Nations, was itself a reaction intended to curb man's desire for war and to save the human race from self-destruction. Since the creation of the United Nations, in 1945, and despite its best efforts in this direction, wars and conflicts have remained a constant factor in man's geopolitical and geo-strategic thinking. This led to the cold war, the consequent arms race and nuclear proliferation.

Recently, new forms of conflict have emerged that are mainly intra-State in nature. Some of these conflicts arose as a result of deliberate post-colonial policy to bring together, sometimes by force, ethnic groups that had lived independently and, often, in an adversarial relationship with one another. Others arose

because of contests over the control of national resources and/or the machinery of government. The situation is further compounded by dwindling economic development and an increase in the level of poverty in most developing countries. Consequently, most of the conflicts to emerge have been in developing countries. Today, post-independence African countries are faced with the challenges of peace, security and stability. The intensification of these conflicts in the post-cold-war period has led to the phenomenon of failed States in such places as Liberia and Somalia, where all institutions of government have disintegrated.

As a result of these conflicts there has been an uncontrollable increase in United Nations peacekeeping activities in recent years. The number of troops, military observers and civilian police personnel involved has now risen to about 40,000, from approximately 15,000 barely a year ago. Current United Nations missions include the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, just to mention a few. These United Nations missions have met with varying degrees of success, and in some cases they have met with total disaster or setback, such as in Somalia and in the recent abduction of several UNAMSIL troops in Sierra Leone.

If we are to stem the rising tide of conflicts in the world and to ensure the success of United Nations peacekeeping operations, the United Nations must redefine its strategies and embrace closer consultation and cooperation among stakeholders. This is why my delegation embraces the recommendation contained in the Brahimi Panel's report, which has also been endorsed by the Security Council and the General Assembly. If they are to be achieved, mandates must not only be clear and credible, there must also be adequate coordination and consultation between potential troop-contributing countries and the members of the Security Council during the mandate-formulation process. The report also recommended the establishment of an ad hoc subsidiary organ of the Council, as provided for under Article 29 of the Charter, so as to institutionalize the advice of troop-contributing countries to the Security Council.

My delegation welcomes these and all other recommendations requiring that troop-contributing countries be consulted when the concept and/or plan of operation of a peacekeeping operation is being considered; when the extension of the mandate of a peacekeeping operation is being considered; when a substantive modification of the mandate of an existing peacekeeping operation, including the broadening or narrowing of the geographical scope, changes in rules of engagement and the introduction of new functions of its components are being considered; and, finally, during cost consideration for the selection of field commanders.

It is heart-warming to observe that after the Brahimi Panel's report the Secretary-General has come out in support of the need for

"countries that have committed military units to an operation [to] have access to Secretariat briefings to the Council on matters affecting the safety and security of their personnel, especially those meetings with implications for a mission's use of force." (*S/2000/809, para. 64 (d)*)

It is our belief that a clear exchange of facts and an assessment of the risks involved in an operation will better prepare the minds of troop-contributing countries for possible political backlash at home resulting from their involvement in United Nations peacekeeping operations. This sense of mutual trust, if created through open and frank consultations, will make potential troop contributors more forthcoming and accept joint responsibilities for decisions taken.

Consultation by itself is not enough when the advice of those who have relevant experience, whether solicited or not, is not taken into consideration. We believe that the views of troop-contributing countries and of other regional actors should be taken into consideration at all stages of decision-making on peacekeeping operations, as has been recommended. While we are not saying that the present system is adequate, we nevertheless wish to commend the Security Council's initiative of holding consultation with the Economic Community of West African States Ministerial Mediation and Security Committee on Sierra Leone, led by the Malian Foreign Minister, Modibo Sidibé, which held extensive consultations last year with members of the Council on the situation in Sierra Leone.

The outcome of that consultation and the subsequent visits of the Security Council members to various conflict areas in Africa definitely were useful, as they led to better appreciation of the issues involved. In addition, they played significant roles in renewing the confidence of our subregion, and indeed the continent, in the capability and sincerity of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security. This approach of holding consultations with regional leaders and troop-contributing countries should, therefore, be sustained and institutionalized.

It is our sincere hope that at the end of this debate, a common ground on the method of consultation among the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries will be found. My delegation would like to suggest that the Secretariat should, in addition to the other points mentioned earlier, consult troop-contributing countries during the review of document guidelines manuals. In addition, it would be appreciated if the briefing notices and working papers could be gazetted and circulated well in advance to the troop-contributing countries. The operational briefings by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to troop-contributing countries should also be in written form.

My delegation will appreciate it if the Secretariat will assume responsibility for the transportation and accommodation costs of those delegates who may be invited from capitals to brief or consult with the Security Council or the Secretariat on issues relating to ongoing peacekeeping operations.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to conclude by extending the warm congratulations of the Nigerian delegation to the newly elected non-permanent members of the Security Council: namely, Mauritius, Singapore, of course, Colombia, Ireland and Norway. My delegation wishes to reassure you of its commitment to the Charter of our Organization, particularly its provisions regarding the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President: I will now suspend the meeting. In accordance with the understanding reached among members of the Council, when we resume this afternoon, I will first give the floor to Council members.

The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m.